

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANILA 00558 120956Z
ACTION SCSE-00

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P 120744Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4785

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, RP (POSNER, PAUL WESLEY AND MATTHEW JACOB)
SUBJECT: W/W PAUL WESLEY AND MATTHEW JACOB POSNER

REF: STATE 002950

1. CONSULAR OFFICER VISITED THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MANILA JAN. 10 AND SPOKE WITH MR. J. BRADLEY, THE GUIDANCE COUNSELOR OF STEVEN AND PAUL POSNER. HE REPORTED THAT STEVEN IS NOT DOING TOO BADLY IN SCHOOL, CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES. STEVEN WHO IS NEARLY 18 AND IN THE 10TH GRADE IS A PRIOR 1-1/2-YEAR HS DROPOUT. HIS GRADES ARE MARGINAL, I.E., C'S AND D'S, BUT AS MR. BRADLEY POINTED OUT, HE IS AT LEAST ATTENDING SCHOOL NOW ON A REGULAR BASIS. STEVEN IS NO LONGER LIVING WITH HIS FATHER, HAVING MOVED OUT, AND IS STAYING WITH A SCHOOLMATE. PAUL, ACCORDING TO MR. BRADLEY, IS AN HONOR STUDENT. MATTHEW IS IN A LOWER GRADE AND WAS NOT PART OF DISCUSSION.

2. AFTER MEETING WITH MR. BRADLEY, STEVEN AND PAUL WERE INTERVIEWED. STEVEN TOLD CONOFF THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO HIS MOTHER BY TELEPHONE ON JAN 9. HE INTENDS TO REMAIN IN MANILA AND HIS MOTHER WILL PROVIDE AT LEAST PART OF FUNDS FOR HIS MAINTENANCE HERE. AT BEGINNING OF INTERVIEW, PAUL WAS ADAMANT ABOUT RETURNING TO U.S. AS, HE SAID, WAS MATTHEW. HOWEVER, BY CONCLUSION OF OUR DISCUSSION PAUL REALIZED HIS DECISION TO RETURN TO THE U.S. HINGED ON SEVERAL THINGS: FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT IS, IF HIS FATHER HAS LEGAL CUSTODY, WILL HE ALLOW THE BOYS TO JOIN THEIR MOTHER; SECONDLY, HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT HIS 8-YEAR-OLD STEPSISTER; AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WHO WILL PROVIDE

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TRANSPORTATION.

3. THE BOYS SEEM WELL ADJUSTED AND WOULD LIKE TO REMAIN IN SCHOOL HERE BUT NOT IF IT MEANS LIVING WITH THEIR FATHER. ACCORDING TO THE BOYS, THE PRESENT MRS POSNER IS CONSIDERING A SEPARATION AND IF THIS OCCURS WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME, THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO STAY WITH HER IN ORDER TO KEEP THE CHILDREN TOGETHER.

4. WHEN ASKED, THE BOYS DID NOT SAY THAT FATHER HAD PHYSICALLY ABUSED THEM BUT RATHER COMPLAINED ABOUT THE HOSTILE ATMOSPHERE THAT PREVAILS IN THE HOUSEHOLD. THE PHILIPPINES DOES NOT HAVE A CHILD ABUSE LAW PER SE, BUT MISTREATMENT OF CHILDREN IS COVERED UNDER THE PENAL CODE UNDER CRIMES OF SLIGHT OR SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURIES.

5. PAUL ASKED FOR TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHAT TO DO AND WHEN HE DECIDES, HE WILL CONTACT EMBASSY, AND CONOFF WILL THEN APPROACH FATHER AND ATTEMPT TO WORK OUT BOYS' RELEASE AND REPATRIATION. IN THIS REGARD, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW CUSTODY TERMS OF DIVORCE. MR. POSNER IS STILL EMPLOYED AND STEPMOTHER IS STILL AT HOME.
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